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SUBJECT: USAID SPONSORS MBA STUDENTS FROM MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
POPULATION

REF: CAIRO 1913

Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶1. (U) Summary. The Ambassador attended a July 2 media event with Minister of Health and Population Dr. Hatem El-Gabaly and seven MOHP employees who will attend USAID funded MBA programs in the U.S. El-Gabaly plans a U.S. visit in December. End Summary.

¶2. (U) On July 2, the Ambassador attended a press event hosted by Minister of Health and Population Hatem El-Gabaly to promote \$2 million in USAID scholarships for seven MOHP employees to attend MBA programs in the U.S. Another nine MOHP employees will go next year. This MBA scholarship program is in response to El-Gabaly's request to develop a cadre of business-minded professionals within the MOHP to implement new paradigms in health care delivery. El-Gabaly wants to send up to 500 MOHP employees on similar programs.

¶3. (U) With media present, El-Gabaly praised the USG-funded MBA scholarships as a "really big thing for us" due to the "enormous difference in thinking and leadership" that will result at MOHP. El-Gabaly then praised the nearly USD 1 billion in USG aid over the years for health programs that reached "the poorest of the poor and changed their lives by improving their health." The Ambassador remarked on USG and GOE partnership based on friendship and a mutual interest in prosperity that often begins with good health. The Minister and Ambassador took photos with the MBA students for the assembled press. State-owned dailies, Al-Gomhouriya and Al-Akhbar, ran front-page articles on July 3 with photos of the Minister and Ambassador with the students. The report also ran on television.

Minister to visit U.S. - Requests High Level Meetings

¶4. (U) After the press conference, Econoff met an advisor to the Minister, Dr. Mokhtar Warida, who sought Embassy's help to plan meetings for the Minister's December 3-6 visit to the U.S. He requested meetings with high-level contacts across the USG and asked for suggestions for a private sector event. Post will send details of the visit and meeting requests closer to the date.

¶5. (SBU) COMMENT: This was the second positive press event in two days orchestrated by El-Gabaly. A leader in the "second generation" of reformers, El-Gabaly is charged with improving health services and reducing corruption in his massive bureaucracy. His appointment last year reflected the Mubarak regime's acknowledgement that reforms should extend to service ministries. The MBA initiative is all one El-Gabaly's signature programs, aimed at introducing great management and transparency to health services. Unlike other GOE ministers El-Gabaly is embracing USG support and flagging it publicly. He has had no difficulty generating positive press for his partnership initiatives.

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